

North Lanarkshire Council

Report

Education and Families Committee

approval noting

Ref GM/FH

Date 19/05/20

1140 Early Learning & Childcare Expansion Programme Update

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Executive Summary

The 1140 Expansion programme for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) is a national programme being developed in a unique way in North Lanarkshire, in response to specific local circumstances.

This report provides Education and Families Committee with a progress update on the 1140 hours Early Learning and Childcare expansion programme within North Lanarkshire.

The programme has moved from the planning to the implementation stage and this report provides committee with the current position with regard to infrastructure and the capital financial position, workforce, free school meals and stakeholder engagement.

This paper also reinforces previous reports which have been approved by committee and is based on ongoing and significant consultation with all affected stakeholders. In addition, it supports and aligns fully with The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Education and Families Committee:

- (1) Note the progress for the 1140 hours implementation.
- (2) Note the progress of identifying costs of minor adaptations in ELC settings.
- (3) Note the progress of Family Learning Centre HUB facilities.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority All priorities

Ambition statement (7) Enhance collaborative working to maximise support and ensure all our children and young people are included, supported, and safe

1. Background

- 1.1. Members are asked to note the joint communication recently received from Scottish Government and COSLA advising that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a decision has been taken to suspend the statutory duty placed on education authorities to make 1140 hours of early learning and childcare available to each eligible child from August 2020. Much of the work planned, to enable the roll out of 1140 hours, has had to cease. Works such as construction projects, recruitment and induction of staff.
- 1.2. Scottish Government and COSLA have stated that whilst remaining fully committed to the rollout of 1140 hours, it is unknown when full delivery will be achievable. They will not be able to do so until the extent and duration of the impacts of the pandemic are clear. At the appropriate time new implementation proposals will be brought forward, allowing Scottish Ministers to bring legislation back to the Scottish Parliament to secure 1140 hours entitlement for all eligible children.
- 1.3 Councils have been encouraged to review local expansion plans and for close partnership working to continue with Funded Providers. Whilst the implementation of an enhanced entitlement for Early Learning and Childcare provision presents a significant challenge; both for Council staff, key stakeholders and partners, a dedicated Early Learning and Childcare team continues to progress through the implementation plan and monitor and report on ongoing activity. The vision for Early Learning and Childcare in the Council has remained consistent through this period and is as follows:-

Deliver in partnership, by a skilled workforce, in stimulating and nurturing environments, high quality and flexible Early Learning and Childcare which is affordable and accessible for all.'

2. Report

2.1. 1140 Operational Planning

2.1.1. 1140 Implementation Plan

A high level overarching implementation plan is in place following the significant work done over the past year to ensure adherence to the North Lanarkshire approach. This is further supported by a comprehensive work plan that enables key stakeholders to track the progress and status of the project moving towards the final phases of implementation. The ELC team is continuing to progress through the work plans in order to implement 1140 hours.

2.2. Infrastructure

- 2.2.1. Committee are asked to note that all building sites have ceased operations in line with Scottish Government restrictions on non-essential construction works. Costs associated with all projects potentially may increase due to programme increases, remobilisation and materials shortage and high demand. The Council is obtaining legal advice on all construction contracts including 1140 ELC Nursery Expansion in respect to procedures on programme delays and potential contractor claims for loss and expense.

- 2.2.2. Prior to Covid19 pandemic site closures, w/c 30 March 2020, Committee is asked to note the progress of construction work on all 6 of the new build family Learning Centres (FLCs).

| Location | Name | Progress |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Carbrain, Cumbernauld | Broomlands Family Learning Centre | 30% |
| Coltness, Wishaw | Innerleithen Family Learning Centre | 15% |
| Newmains, Wishaw | Abernethyn Family Learning Centre | 30% |
| Chapelhall, Airdrie | Calderview Family Learning Centre | 52% |
| Petersburn, Airdrie | Petersburn Family Learning Centre | 50% |
| Netherton, Wishaw | Netherton Family Learning Centre | 50% |

- 2.2.3. Prior to works being suspended w/c 30th March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Committee is asked to note the status of the remaining 3 new build FLC sites and the 4 Nursery Class adaptations:

Heathery Park Family Learning Centre – not yet in contract award. Site permeability/porosity tests have been undertaken and are inconclusive. A further test has been instructed to monitor soakaway properties below the clay level. This was originally planned to take approximately 5 weeks plus review time. On completion it will assist in determining the capacity of the existing ground in respect to surface water discharge.

Forgewood Family Learning Centre - not yet in contract award. The technical design for Forgewood is complete and awaiting approval from Scottish Water. Scottish Water have suspended non-essential operations including determination of technical designs.

Cumbernauld Village Family Learning Centre - not yet in contract award. Planning conditions have now been received and include an archaeological survey to be undertaken before works can commence. The costs for the survey are being collated for approval and are currently estimated as £30k. An initial Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared and submitted to the Planning Authority for approval. To mitigate any potential programme delay it had been suggested that a letter of intent be issued to permit part demolition of existing building to permit access to construction traffic to commence works, however this is currently now delayed.

Whitelees Nursery Class: The contract was awarded to Procast and work started on-site start on 09.03.2020.

Townhead Nursery Class: The contract award is dependent on Scottish Government advice on construction works restrictions. Pre-COVID-19 tender acceptance was programmed for April 2020 to achieve August completion, however advice and guidance from the Scottish Government is ongoing and updates will be provided when appropriate

St Augustines Nursery Class: The contract was awarded to Emtec Property Services with a site start programmed for 06.03.2020.

Shawhead Nursery Class: Constuction work is 20% complete.

- 2.2.4. To support the delivery of 1140hrs contingency plans, and to make best use of existing settings applications are being progressed to the Care Inspectorate for variations in the registered numbers of children attending 31 ELC settings. In order to comply with Care Inspectorate regulations a number of settings have been

identified as requiring minor adaptations. The contingency plan has been shared with colleagues in Asset and Procurement Services and work is ongoing to identify full costs. The following is a list of adaptations and costs identified to date. Further costs will be taken to the SCDG and brought to future committee.

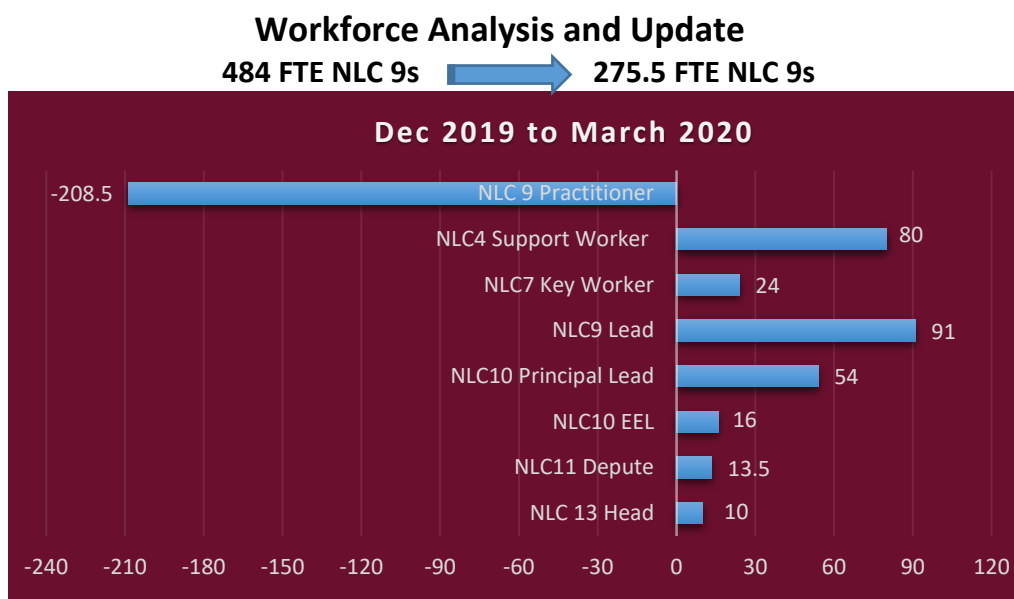
| Establishments | Action | Estimated cost |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------|
| St Patricks Shotts | Installation of children's toilets and increase space used to allow increase in numbers | TBC |
| Muirhouse NC | Install entrance vestibule/Cloakroom. Kitchen to be replaced as unfit for purpose | TBC |
| Keir Hardie | Convert cupboard to changing area | TBC |
| Corpus Christi NC | Convert cupboard to changing area | TBC |
| Greengairs NC | Convert cupboard to changing area. | TBC |
| St Marys C/Bridge | Additional cloakroom facilities to allow change of use. | TBC |
| Stane | Supply and Fit Video handset Freestanding canopy to front entrance with side screens to protect from weather | £1,335 £12,000 |
| John Paul II | Use of crèche room to increase capacity. | TBC |
| St Davids | Use of classroom next door. Create access. | TBC |
| Honeywell | Vinyl in community room | TBC |
| Langloan | Installation of toilets off main playroom to allow creation of changing area at cloakroom. | TBC |
| Sacred Heart/Orbiston | Amalgamation of both nurseries within sacred Heart primary. Create access between playroom and classroom. Install new security door and panel. | £44,000 |

2.3. Workforce

There has been a major on-going exercise of workforce change required within the 1140 Hours expansion programme. This is due to the nature of the workforce, and the need to manage the existing group of NLC 9 staff into the new delivery models which have been established as part of the expansion. This is being done in close collaboration with trade unions. Separately, there is also a piece of work being undertaken to ensure that nursery teachers are reconfigured within new patterns. Please see below a recruitment update:

| Grade | Designation | Hrs | Still Require | Appointed |
|--------|----------------|-----|---------------|---|
| NLC 13 | Head of Centre | 35 | 8 FTE | 6 posts to be advertised externally. (1 post on hold - Heathery Park) |
| NLC 11 | Depute HOC | 35 | 6.5 FTE | 4.5 posts internally advertised, (1 post on hold Heathery Park) |
| NLC 10 | Principal Lead | 35 | 6 FTE | 6 posts internally advertised |
| NLC 9 | Lead | 35 | 36.4 FTE | 36.4 posts to be internally advertised |

- 2.3.1. As part of the admissions process a staffing exercise is taking place to identify the number of Keyworker (NLC 7) and Support Worker (NLC 4) positions required in order to fully implement 1140 hours. Currently there are 48 Keyworkers (NLC 7), 18 of which are Modern apprentices and over 200 Support Workers (NLC 4), 9 of which are Winter Leavers on the supply list. The results of the staffing exercise will accurately identify requirements for any further recruitment of Keyworkers and Support Workers.
- 2.3.2. A further 2 Head of Centre positions and 4.5 Depute Heads have become available due to strategic workforce planning. The 1140 programme Board gave approval on 3rd March to advertise 6 heads of centres post externally as the internal process has been exhausted.
- 2.3.3. It is anticipated the internal promoted post appointments will continue to reduce the number of Early Learning Practitioners (ELP) posts (NLC 9s) within the structure. As an ELP post becomes vacant they are backfilled according to the new staffing models and structures with Keyworkers (NLC7s) and Support Workers (NLC4s). This has a positive impact on the ELC staffing budget. The graph below represents the reduction of Early Learning Practitioners NLC9s to date, those who have actually moved, and further updates will be provided to future committees. Importantly, this is an iterative process and there will be additional movement in the next few months.



- 2.3.4. There is a need to continue to focus on the remaining internal recruitment, and although, current COVID-19 challenges have delayed the process, the intention is to continue to progress with the recruitment in order to implement 1140 hours. To ensure progression the ELC team will liaise with HR, ESC and the trade unions to develop creative and equitable recruitment and interview approaches.
- 2.3.5. In response to COVID-19 the Council focused on the urgent task of providing critical childcare for children of key workers and those from our most vulnerable families. To support this process from 30 March, 24 early years' staff who had recently been successful for Principal Lead & Deputes management positions under the 1140 programme were moved into temporary promoted posts to support the ELC provision within the Community Hubs and Family Learning Centres. Bringing

forward the promotions of ELC staff, and placing them into temporary was necessary to ensure proper management structures are in place in accordance with Care Inspectorate statutory requirements.

- 2.3.6. Nursery Teachers - Professional discussions have now taken place to support the matching-in process of 6 nursery teachers moving into Equity and Excellence Lead Teachers posts. Individual Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities have been planned for and will be provided to support the transition into their new positions.

2.4. Phasing Plan & Admissions 2020/21

- 2.4.1. Phase 1, 2 and 3 of the phasing plan were completed in terms of establishment's being staffed to operate 1140 hours.

Estimated numbers of 2-5yr olds in ELC settings August 2020 is 7580. The numbers forecast within funded providers may vary as a result of admissions 2020/21 requests. However, 22% of the estimated 23% target for children attending funded providers was previously reported in March 2020. Please see update below:

| | Establishments/Services | Children | Lunches |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Phase 1 & 2. August to November | 12 term time nursery classes are able to deliver 1140 hrs. 16 FLCs and 7 nursery classes with eligible 2s are able to delivering additionality | Capacity 927, 3-5yr olds 122, 2yr olds | 2344 children |
| | Funded Providers | 1512, 3-5yr olds 76, 2yr olds | 1512 children (approx) |
| Phase 3. December to March | 6 additional term time nursery classes are delivering 1140 hrs. | Additional Capacity 3436, 3-5yr olds | Estimate additional 1900 children |
| | Funded Providers | Additional uptake 123, 3-5yr olds | 123 children (approx) |
| Phase 4: February to June 2020 | Remaining establishments models and ASN nursery classes being staffed to delivering 1140 for all remaining children with statutory entitlement | Additional Capacity 3436, 3-5yr olds | Estimated additional 1701 children |

- 2.4.2. As per the schedule, all 95 establishment visits have been completed, and over 500 staff have had individual discussions with 1140 Expansion Officers as part of this process. This process has clarified contractual information for each staff member. This intelligence is currently being utilised to secure establishment staffing requirements alongside the admissions data and identify any further recruitment requirements. In addition this provides an audit of each establishment, which will then be crosschecked against iTrent before revenue is confirmed for the 2020-2021 budget setting. The expectation is now for staff teams to move into their new positions in June 2020 in preparation for delivering 1140 hours from August 2020
- 2.4.3. The admissions process continues to progress in relation to the timeline, previously share at Committee.

- 2.4.4. There are 3753 returning children and to date 3282 active applications have been received. This figure doesn't include late applications. This includes the number of children deferring entry to primary 1. Please find below an overview of deferral requests; approved and declined for academic year 2020-2021

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of automatic deferrals | 224 |
| Total number of discretionary deferrals | 58 |
| Discretionary approved | 37 |
| Discretionary declined | 21 |
| Discretionary Appeals | 6 |
| Discretionary Appeals Approved | 6 |
| Discretionary Appeals rejected | 0 |

- 2.4.5. The new digital ELC admissions and enrolment system continues to be developed. Due to the demand in terms of training and development for all councils who are planning on using this system, the implementation date was delayed until 2 November 2020, however this may now be further delayed. Use of the existing robust processes will continue until the point of implementation to ensure effective service delivery. Further updates will be reported to committee

2.4.6. Establishment Models

Committee will recall the 1140 model previously included 106 Council establishments. This included 49 term time nursery classes (38wks) 27 full time nursery classes (48wks) and 24 family learning centres (48wks). Based on current admissions data please see the revised establishment models:

| Establishment Models: | Initial Position | Revised Position |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Family Learning Centres | 24 | 24 |
| Nursery Class Term-Time | 49 (including one Gaelic Medium) | 56 (including one Gaelic Medium) |
| Nursery Class Full-Time | 27 (including one Gaelic Medium) | 23 (including one Gaelic Medium) |
| ASN Nursery Classes/Settings | 5 | 10 |

- 2.4.7. As all new builds will potentially be delayed contingencies will need to be implemented. Based on current admissions data 25% of the 56 term time nursery classes would convert to full time as part of a contingency plan in order to deliver 1140 hours for children from August 2020.

2.5. **Family Hub Approach**

- 2.5.1. Committee will recall the proposal to enhance the quality of ELC community support within 15 Family Learning Centres who currently provide provision for children 2 to 5 years. A Hub model is being developed within localities to support our youngest most vulnerable children and families. The intention is to strengthen the targeted support offered to parents in the context of the local area. By improving accessibility to appropriate services and developing high quality coordinated support through an

integrated services model in close collaboration with families and carers. This will enhance opportunities for consistent and focused engagement. Committee are therefore asked to note the reopening of 8, birth to two year old facilities within 8 of the FLCs and open 7 Additional Support Need facilities within the remaining 7 of the 15 FLCs.

- 2.5.2. A mapping exercise is taking place looking at the current admissions for children 3 to 5 years with additional support needs, who have been allocated a specialised placement. This is to identify specific family learning centres who will accommodate and support ASN children families in the context of their local area and identify the remaining FLCs able to offer provision to support our youngest most vulnerable children and families.

2.6. **Procurement Update**

- 2.6.1. Committee will recall that following the completion of the procurement of provision of early learning and childcare, for the delivery of 1140 hours, from August 2020, 185 tenderers (148 childminder and 37 private/voluntary nurseries) successfully met the award stage requirements (price and quality) and were appointed to the framework. This framework will remain in place from 1 August 2020 until 31 July 2023.
- 2.6.2. At the planning stage of 1140 hours it was anticipated that all private/voluntary nurseries within North Lanarkshire would submit a tender to be part of the 1140 hour early learning and childcare framework, with all nurseries being included when assessing capacity across North Lanarkshire.
- 2.6.3. Four nurseries that are currently funded providers, did not submit a tender. These nurseries, currently contracted for academic year 2019, with their contract due to end 31 July 2020, are providing early learning and childcare for a combined total of around 120 children.
- 2.6.4. Based on historic knowledge that children going into their pre-school year look to remain with their current early learning and childcare provider and that all nurseries were included when assessing capacity for 1140 hours, advice was sought from the Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions and the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions it was agreed that these nurseries could submit a tender via the National Tendering Process (NTP) route.
- 2.6.5. All four nurseries were successful in this tendering process and will be an early learning and childcare funded provider, for the delivery of 1140 hours, from 1 August 2020 until 31 March 2021. These nurseries, along with any new childcare provider, will have the option to tender for period 2020-2023 in August 2020.

2.7. **Quality**

- 2.7.1. The ELC service has recently appointed 5 Quality Officers who will assist and support in the delivery of the Council strategic vision for the entitlement to 1140 hours by 2020 and beyond. The ELC manager and team will provide support to

local authority settings, childminders and independent, private and voluntary nurseries on the requirements of the National Standards.

- 2.7.2. The following places have been secured from August 2020 in order to enable the ELC work force to continue to meet the statutory requirements of Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) for promoted practitioners and support workers, and to support career progression.

| Qualification Data (20-21) | Number of Places | Priority |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| PDA (new cohort) | 22 | ELC Support Workers |
| HNC (new cohort) | 22 | ELC Support Workers |
| BA (new cohort) | 20 | Principal leads/EELs |

- 2.7.3. The Scottish Government recently provided the ELC team with extremely positive feedback in recognition of the very good progress and plans in place to develop and enhance quality improvement, in particular the training and development opportunities in place to support the workforce at all levels, moving towards 1140 hours and beyond (appendix 2). Although, the current COVID-19 situation presents many challenges to the delivery of training and development, the ELC quality team will continue to develop innovative and creative ways to deliver aspects of training and development to support the workforce to implement and deliver 1140 hours.
- 2.7.4. The PEEP Learning Together Programme (PEEP LTP) have a two-year contract with Scottish Government to establish a Family Learning Scotland Programme. This well-evidenced programme supports parents to recognise and understand how their child learns while empowering parents to enhance learning with opportunities that exist every day. This formal learning is recognised with the award of a City & Guilds qualification for parents. Allocations are based on deprivation and North Lanarkshire Council has been allocated **40 training places** for ELC staff. This training will enable staff to become PEEP trainers with costs and ongoing support being met by the Scottish Government's Tackling Child Poverty Fund. This training was due to begin in August 2020. Future updates will be provided to Committee.
- 2.7.5. The Care Inspectorate Improvement Programme: In March 2020 we began working with the Care Inspectorate, which was to span over an 18-month period. The programme was designed to support ELC settings and enable staff to build the skills and knowledge necessary to apply quality improvement; to cover specific thematic areas of inspection and how to make 'quick wins' to make sustainable improvement linked to the National Standard. Five settings were identified to participate (3 Council and 2 funded providers) who are not yet meeting the National Standard to participate. This is currently delayed due to COVID-19, however updates will be provided to future Committee.

2.8. **Financial Position 2019/20**

2.8.1. Capital (£1.386m Overspend)

The Early Years Expansion (1140 Hours) capital programme has been allocated £20.350m from the Scottish Government by way of a multi-year Capital Grant. In the current year the Strategic Capital Delivery Group (SCDG) allocated a further £2.200m effective from 1 April 2019 specifically for Forgewood Family Learning Centre (FLC). The Forgewood FLC was previously included in the 600 hours nursery roll out and has been carried forward to the current programme. The programme is projecting an overspend of £1.386m on final completion of all work streams with projected expenditure of £23.936m relative to resources of £22.550m. Funding options to support the anticipated overspend will be presented to a future meeting of the Strategic Capital Delivery Group.

2.8.2. Revenue (£6.000m Earmarked Reserve)

In the current financial year Early Years has a total budget of £50.143m inclusive of £20.550m specific grant funding for Early Learning & Childcare initiatives. Current projections indicate approximately £6.000m in relation to Early Years activity can be re-aligned to an Earmarked Reserve. The creation of this reserve reflects funding allocations for early years expansion being in advance of operational roll out of the initiative. It is anticipated that following closure of the 2019/20 financial year, this reserve will support Early Years operational budgets going forward into future years and incorporating decisions agreed during the recent Council budget setting process.

2.9. **Communication Strategy**

2.9.1. Due to the COVID19 we have delayed the next edition of the ELC Expansion Newsletter.

2.9.2. The informal opening of the new modular building at Stane nursery class by the Convenor of Education, Councillor McNally has been postponed.

2.9.3. During the lockdown the use of social media has been very important to keep families and communities informed. Across all early learning and childcare settings staff have been keeping in touch with their families and sharing ideas on twitter and facebook pages.

2.9.4. Recent correspondence from the Scottish Government advising that the plan to delivery 1140hrs in August has been delayed created many enquiries from parents. Regular updates continue to be provided to the ELC team and wider workforce (as well as external providers) on 1140 progress and current ELC developments, internally on Yammer and Connect and externally on corporate social media platforms, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. There is a dedicated Twitter handle @earlyyearsnlc

- 2.9.5. The @EarlyyearsNLC twitter account has been a great way to keep families informed we have 2,392 followers.
- 2.9.6. The ELC inbox continues to provide a single point of contact for ELC enquiries and these enquiries are still being monitored and dealt with by the ELC team/1140 programme staff.
- 2.9.7. Admissions – We are still on target for communicating with parents their allocation of nursery places at the end of May. The lockdown may mean that where possible we will send this information to parents by email.
- 2.9.8. During this unprecedented lockdown many of the early learning and childcare staff are still providing a service to keyworkers and vulnerable families. Our ongoing positive relationship and communication with the trade unions has enabled this delivery to run smoothly.
- 2.9.9. Although many of our partner providers are not providing a service at present we continue to communicate via emails and conference calls to keep them up to date on our plans for admissions and future 1140 delivery.
- 2.9.10. A briefing paper was approved by Gold Command to release a statement to funded providers regarding our intentions to continue to progress 1140 hours (appendix 1). Our aim is very much to continue to work in partnership with our funded providers to ensure we are in a strong place to deliver our ambitions for early learning and childcare for all children as soon as practicable, after the pandemic response comes to an end.
- 2.9.11. Discussions took place with Scottish Government on 24 April regarding the impact of COVID-19. The main points discussed were the arrangements in place to ensure sufficient critical childcare for our most vulnerable children and children of keyworkers, and the effects on the delivery of the 1140 expansion programme. The dialogue was extremely positive and Scottish Government commented they were overwhelmed with the level of work undertaken within such a short period of time both provide a critical childcare service and progress the expansion plans. They advised we continue to work closely with the West Partnership to ensure consistency for funded providers during the unprecedented times.

3. **Equality and Diversity**

3.1. Fairer Scotland

The strategy of NLC, as approved by the Education Committee in November 2017, is to positively target families who live in SIMD areas 1–4 to address disadvantage and barriers to success. Consideration has also been given to ensure there is a mix of services within localities to support accessibility and parental demand.

3.2. Equality Impact Assessment

This is a universal statutory entitlement for all 3–5 year olds and eligible 2 year olds from August 2020.

4. Implications

4.1. Financial Impact

The roll out of the 1140 hours expansion programme will continue to be monitored against the available capital and revenue grant funding, with regular updates provided to committee.

4.2. HR/Policy/Legislative Impact

The expansion is driven by legislation and Scottish Government guidance in ensuring the provision of 1140 hours Early Learning and Childcare as a statutory requirement from August 2020 for all three–five year olds and eligible two year olds.

4.3. Environmental Impact

Access to local early learning and childcare services will provide environmental benefits through the use of local community based networks and facilities. It will continue to make North Lanarkshire the best place to live and learn in.

4.4. Risk Impact

Without the workforce and infrastructure in place by August 2020, the council may be at risk of failing in their statutory duty to provide 1140 hours nursery provision to all three - five year olds and eligible 2 year olds, resulting in limited parental choice within North Lanarkshire. Risks are being managed through regular review of the programme risk register, by implementing controls and reporting high level risks to the Programme Board.

5. Measures of success

5.1. Delivery of the expansion within the required timescale, ensuring full access to 1140 hours Early Learning and Childcare provision by August 2020.

5.2. Children have access to funded entitlement of 1140 hours from August 2020.

6. Supporting documents

6.1 **Appendix 1: Funded providers - 1140 hours Update**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gerard McLaughlin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Gerard McLaughlin
Head of Education (North)
Education and Families



Appendix 1

Education and Families

Subject : Funded providers: 1140 hours Update

Background

Please see a statement below which was released to the press on 1 April 2020 and forwarded to all our funded providers:

North Lanarkshire Council were making very good progress towards delivering 1140 hours and were on track to provide additional high-quality early learning and childcare for our young children from August 2020.

We will now review our expansion plans so that we are in a strong place to deliver our ambitions for early learning and childcare for all children as soon as practicable, after the pandemic response comes to an end.

We remain committed to providing a high-quality foundation for every child to develop socially, emotionally and educationally, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Recommendation

A number of funded providers have been making enquires. They have referenced that they were encouraged by the Councils statement, however would like further clarity. A recommendation is to release the following update to the funded providers:

Our recent statement in terms of 1140 hours made reference to the very positive progress we have made and the fact that we were on track to provide additional high-quality early learning and childcare for our young children from August 2020.

The Scottish government plans to delay the statutory entitlement will not halt our plans to continue to progress towards the delivery of 1140 hours. Albeit, there may be some delay in terms of COVID related issues, NLC new builds and some recruitment activities. Hence the need to review some aspects of our expansion plans.

In terms of admissions it is business as usual and we are continuing to work through this process. Part of this process involves working closely with all ELC settings looking at both demand and capacity and where possible securing parents/carers first choice for nursery provision for their child.

Our aim is very much to continue to work in partnership with our funded providers to ensure we are in a strong place to deliver our ambitions for early learning and childcare for all children from August 2020 subject to any future Scottish Government advice regarding COVID-19 recovery.
